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TOKYO SONATA

directed by

KIYOSHI KUROSAWA



FESTIVAL DE CANNES

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UN CERTAIN REGARD

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Credits:

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TANAKA**
Producers: **YUKIE KITO & WOUTER BARENDRECHT**
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Co-Producer: **HIROHISA MUKUJU**
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Sound Mixer: **MASAYUKI IWAKURA**
Edited by: **KOICHI TAKAHASHI**
Lighting Designer: **TOKUJU ICHIKAWA**
Cinematography by: **AKIKO ASHIZAWA**

Cast:

RYUHEI SASAKI	TERUYUKI KAGAWA
MEGUMI SASAKI	KYOKO KOIZUMI
TAKASHI SASAKI	YU KOYANAGI
KENJI SASAKI	KAI INOWAKI
KANEKO	HARUKA IGAWA
KUROSU	KANJI TSUDA
THIEF	KOJI YAKUSHO

Technical Specifications:

Running Time	119 minutes
Gauge	35mm 1:1.85 Color
Sound	Dolby SR
Language	Japanese
Year of Production	2008
Country of Production	Japan/Netherlands/Hong Kong

SYNOPSIS

Set in contemporary Tokyo, TOKYO SONATA is a story of an ordinary Japanese family of four. The father, Ryuhei Sasaki, like any other Japanese businessman, is faithfully devoted to his work. His wife, Megumi, left on her own to manage the house, struggles to retain a bond with her oldest son in college, Takashi, and the youngest, Kenji, a sensitive boy in elementary school. From the exterior the family is seemingly normal, save for the tiny schisms that exist within.

The quiet unraveling of the family begins when Ryuhei loses his job unexpectedly. Facing completely unfamiliar circumstances, he decides not to tell his family and begins his lonely sojourn into the world of the secretly unemployed. Along with many other businessmen who save face by concealing their shameful reality from family and friends, Ryuhei begins to depart each day for work, when, in fact, he kills time in libraries and parks. His lies and torment go unnoticed by Takashi, who becomes increasingly despondent and alienated from his family, and Megumi, who can no longer summon the will to keep her family together.

Meanwhile, Kenji's journey begins to mirror his father's solitary plight. While Ryuhei vehemently refuses to allow Kenji to play the piano, he nevertheless finds a way to take clandestine piano lessons by using his school lunch money for lesson fees. What began as lies created as means to survive in a society increasingly unable to communicate, gradually lead the family into unforeseeable destruction.

In the hands of world famous director Kiyoshi Kurosawa, known for his thrillers and movies of suspense, this story will probe the dark side of human nature and the social problems that confront contemporary Japan. Kurosawa's portrayal of the breakdown and redemption of Japan's "ordinary family" will be every bit as gripping as his previous works.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

This film will portray a very ordinary family in modern Japan. I start from a point where lies, suspicion and a complete breakdown of communication already have established themselves within the family. Without a doubt, this is "modern" and this is also "Japan". However, I would like to show a glimmer of hope in the end. Can I do that? Even if I could do so, would that be something that saves a conventional family? I just do not know now. Since I do not know, I have a strong desire to make this film.

BARREN DISILLUSIONMENT: Kiyoshi Kurosawa's Modern-Day Japanese Family

INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR KIYOSHI KUROSAWA

You have ventured outside of the horror genre before, most notably in BRIGHT FUTURE. Even then, TOKYO SONATA seems like quite a departure for you in terms of your filmmaking.

I am hoping that TOKYO SONATA will be received by the audience as a film unlike any of my previous works. It's been exactly 10 years now since my film was first introduced overseas. During those years, a new generation of filmmakers (those that are much younger than I am) have continuously been introduced to the world. New trends in cinema such as J-horror have occurred, and I myself have worked to keep riding the waves of the times as well. However, I could not shake off the feeling that they are only the extensions of what we failed to do in the 20th century; I felt that it was about time I reflect on my filmmaking once more from an entirely different perspective.

The theme I am most concerned with right now is what kind of generation the 21st century truly is. Why is it so muddled and confused? Why is it so vastly different from the vision of the future we had in the previous century? Who is responsible for the way things turned out? It is difficult to find the answer. TOKYO SONATA was created so that I would not back down in the face of this complex problem, and I expect it to become a new point of departure for me.

Your films are known for their allegorical qualities, and it seems that TOKYO SONATA is no exception. How much would you say that the family depicted in the film represents Japan itself?

In this project, I've tried to delineate the tiny drama of people you can find anywhere in contemporary Tokyo just as it is--with as little exaggeration as possible. This does not mean that the people portrayed here are entirely isolated from the world at large. Whether they notice it or not, these people are constantly influenced by the greater forces of the exterior world, and they continue to be tossed around by the impacts. The small family in the film is directly connected to Japan, and Japan is connected directly to the world. Is it better to desperately protect something that exists inside? Or, is it better to release everything into the exterior? So many Japanese people are faced with these two choices on a daily basis, and they live the 21st century in confusion. Of course, I am one of these people as well.

Your long-time collaborator Koji Yakusho takes an unusual role this time as a manic-depressive burglar. How has this role evolved, especially in regards to Yakusho's involvement?

Koji Yakusho always plays a variation of the outlaw in my films. In this film, there are no characters displaying any outlaw qualities among the four members of the family.

But because I felt it necessary for this family to experience a complete destruction in the latter half of the story, I needed an outlaw that bursts in from the outside world all of a sudden. And that character had naturally fit the image of Yakusho. I couldn't think of anybody else for this part. I feel so blessed that he agreed to take on this small role with such enthusiasm. Moreover, this time what I had him play was the weakest outlaw ever to appear in any of my films. I think this thief is more timid than Ryuhei Sasaki or even his son, Kenji.

In the original script by Max Mannix, the story mostly concentrated on the father and the youngest son. However, in your adaptation, you have significantly boosted the role of the wife/mother, so much so that in some ways she is the emotional arch of the story. Why did you decide to give her a more prominent role?

I thought I would make this film about the most typical family of four in contemporary Japan. So, of course it was impossible not to flesh out the character of the mother. She is the only character confined to the small world within the walls of her house, and she alone does not experience the obvious conflict with the exterior world that all the other characters go through. Yet because of that, she became the most direct symbol of the family. That is why it can be said that her destruction is the destruction of the family, and her revival is the revival of the family.

The role of the older son, albeit the briefest in the story, is also the most politically charged. Was it a deliberate comment on Japan's own relation with America, as well as its own foreign policy?

Rather than a deliberate comment of mine, it can be seen as a glaring depiction of Japan today. If it was possible for Japanese citizens to easily enlist in the American army like in this film, I suspect that a lot of young Japanese people will do so. It's not so much that they like war; they will probably consider war as an option in order to break down this closed-up feeling that permeates throughout Japan. Japan is a country that half-heartedly forbids engaging in war, but young people today instinctively know that things need to change. I fear for our current situation from the bottom of my heart. But just like the father figure in this film, I have no clue what I would possibly say to such young people to keep them from going to war.

INTERVIEW WITH TERUYUKI KAGAWA

You have a history of appearing in award-winning roles in unconventional and daring films such as Jiang Wen's DEVILS ON THE DOORSTEP, Junji Sakamoto's KT and Takashi Miike's SUKIYAKI WESTERN DJANGO. In some respects your role in TOKYO SONATA can be considered your most "conventional", yet that description may also be deceiving. How do you feel your character here fits into your eclectic filmography?

Since it's been 10 years since I last worked with director Kurosawa, I felt a bit of pressure so I asked him to recommend me some films I should see in preparation for TOKYO SONATA. He recommended Federico Fellini's LA STRADA and Abbas Kiarostami's LIFE, AND NOTHING MORE, saying that the two male leads share a similar perspective as Ryuhei. They are somehow detached, looking at the world from afar. In DEVILS ON THE DOORSTEP my character shows the Japanese perspective of China, and in SUKIYAKI WESTERN DJANGO the Japanese perspective is a bit more ambivalent; you can't really tell which country you are from. Ryuhei, on the other hand, clearly represents an international perspective that looks out at the entire world. Also, he is a character that lives in Tokyo, loses his job to a Chinese employee, and helplessly watches his son go off to America—he is in the exact position that Japan itself is in right now. You can really sense Kurosawa's message that even as a resident of Tokyo you are constantly affected by the movement of the world, and it's important to have a worldly perspective. Ryuhei definitely represents this point of view, and while it seems like he is looking at a single point, his vision is deep and reaches far.

How do you yourself view the character of Ryuhei Sasaki? Do you find him pitiful or brave?

I think Ryuhei is Japan incarnate. So if you say that he is pitiful that means Japan is pitiful—perhaps you can say that it is a pitiful country in some aspects. In this film Kurosawa cynically yet warmly depicts how Japan is viewed from an international standpoint. Ryuhei, for instance, uses his authority as a father to boss around his kids, but at work he is easily dismissed, and he lies and puts on a brave face to the one person that should be his equal—his wife. Ryuhei's conflict between honesty and this public front that he feels compelled to maintain is an inherently Japanese problem, and through him Kurosawa has depicted a character who carries on his shoulders all the problems that Japan faces today. That's why I would prefer not to judge his emotions in the film because he has both pitiful and courageous sides to him.

But what I love most about him is that he doesn't die after being hit by a truck—he simply cannot die. What ultimately revives him is music, because that's the only thing that can save him. Music is art, and I think that's the role that this film takes on as well. The last scene is very cinematic and that's what takes to save

the family, and it shows how art is really the only thing that can transcend borders and become international. Nothing else will quite do for Ryuhei—not his work, Japan, or even America. So where does he look for hope? I think TOKYO SONATA responds to this question with a message that shows why Kurosawa creates films. That last piano recital scene is a crucial moment of the film, because in that moment Ryuhei is revived, and I hope the same can be said about Japan as well. When I was performing the last scene, I did it with the belief that Ryuhei's position is representative of Japan itself. The scene encompasses what it means to be a working Japanese actor or a director living in Japan today, and clearly shows the theme of why we continue to make films.

INTERVIEW WITH KYOKO KOIZUMI

How do you feel about the role of the Japanese housewife in today's society? Do you think modern society makes it much harder to just be a homemaker?

I enjoy the freedom of being independent and working full-time, but from time to time I long for a life as a housewife like Megumi's. I've never experienced the life of protecting a home as a wife and as a mother. The great thing about being an actress is that I am able to vicariously fulfill such a longing. "What if I was a housewife..." I thoroughly enjoyed living through the "what ifs" during the shooting of this particular film as well.

Your character actually goes through to biggest transformation in the film; all the while she is trying to stay the strongest in order to uphold her values. How emotionally involved do you become with the role of Megumi Sasaki?

I felt that a housewife possesses many faces and expressions—that of a wife, a mother, a woman and even a girl. The different faces of Megumi came out naturally according to who she was with at a particular time—her husband, her children, the thief and of course with her own self.

This film actually marks the first time that you have ever worked with director Kurosawa. How do you think he differs from other Japanese filmmakers?

The days I spent on set with director Kurosawa were delightful. He never has any doubts on set, so the shooting goes on calmly and smoothly. The staff he chose to work with were wonderful as well, and everyone was incredibly professional. In that kind of environment, the concentrations of us actors never falter. Kurosawa's words are always calm, collected and gentlemanly. In Japanese film sets, things frequently get rather raucous with rough words thrown about, so in that sense perhaps this experience was very unique for me.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

TERUYUKI KAGAWA (RYUHEI SASAKI)

Born in December 7, 1965 in Tokyo, Japan, Teruyuki Kagawa has steadily gained recognition internationally through acclaimed films such as director Jiang Wen's DEVILS ON THE DOORSTEP, the winner of the Grand Prix Award at the 2000 Cannes Film Festival, as well as director Akira Ogata's BOY'S CHOIR, the winner of the Alfred Bauer Award at the Berlin International Film Festival of the same year. Other awards include the Tokyo Film Festival award for Best Actor for the Chinese film NUAN (2003), as well as the Best Supporting Actor honor for Junji Sakamoto's KT (2002) by the respected Kinema Junpo Awards, among others.

In 2006, SWAY, a film by director Miwa Nishikawa in which Kagawa starred opposite Joe Odagiri, was the only Japanese film selected for the 2006 Cannes Film Festival. With his performance of a small-town man suddenly faced with a mysterious murder, Kagawa earned the Best Supporting Actor Award at the Japanese Academy Awards. A frequent nominee at the Japanese Academy Awards, Kagawa was also nominated for Best Supporting Actor in 2008 for his performance in the hit film KISARAGI.

Kagawa's repertoire continues to build with roles in both prize-winning independent cinema as well as major Japanese blockbusters like HERO (2007) and director Takashi Miike's SUKIYAKI WESTERN DJANGO (2007), also starring Quentin Tarantino. His next role is in the omnibus TOKYO! (2008), directed by Michel Gondry, Bong Joon-Ho and Leos Carax.

KYOKO KOIZUMI (MEGUMI SASAKI)

Born in the city of Atsugi, Kanagawa prefecture in Japan on February 4, 1966, Kyoko Koizumi, as a singer, quickly rose to fame with a series of hit songs. Koizumi's versatility helped transition her career beyond the typical terrain of pop idol. Since then, Koizumi remained active and hugely popular in a variety of fields including TV dramas, films and on stage.

Koizumi made her film debut in 1983 with JUKKAI NO MOSUKITO directed by Yoichi Sai, and subsequently took on starring roles in films such as Makoto Wada's MYSTERIOUS ROBBER RUBY (1988). In 2001 Koizumi conquered new grounds as an actress when she starred in Shinji Somai's KAZA-HANA, garnering a nomination at the Japanese Academy Awards and winning the Hochi Film Awards for Best Actress. In 2005's HANGING GARDEN directed by Toshiaki Toyoda, Koizumi's portrayal received critical acclaim; she won Best Actress at the Japan Association of Film Critic's Blue Ribbon Awards and Nikkan Sports Film Awards. Koizumi's recent film projects include Kichitaro Negishi's

WHAT THE SNOW BRINGS (2005), the winner of the Grand Prix at the Tokyo Film Festival, as well as box office hits such as NADA SOU SOU—TEARS FOR YOU (2006) and TOKYO TOWER: MOM & ME, AND SOMETIMES DAD (2007).

Over the years Koizumi has also come into her own as an essayist, and she is well known for her popular columns in magazines and book reviews in newspapers in addition to a series of published books.

YU KOYANAGI (TAKASHI SASAKI)

Yu Koyanagi was born on August 29, 1988 in Tokyo, Japan. He began his career as a model in magazines when he was 3-years-old. The up-and-coming actor has had an array of roles in major TV dramas and film projects. He had his film debut in director Norihiro Koizumi's MIDNIGHT SUN (2006), then continued on to director Osamu Katayama's HEAT ISLAND (2007), Takashi Miike's CROWS: EPISODE ZERO (2007) and BOKU TACHI TO CHŪZAI SAN NO 700 NICHİ SENSŌ (2008) directed by Renpei Tsukamoto. Koyanagi is also an avid snowboarder and drummer, and the 6'1" star loves to play basketball in his spare time.

KAI INOWAKI (KENJI SASAKI)

Born on November 24, 1995, Kai Inowaki began acting at age 10. With a series of TV appearances under his belt, Inowaki has steadily been gaining experience from a young age. Inowaki's starring role as the rebellious youngest son who develops a passion for playing piano in Kiyoshi Kurosawa's TOKYO SONATA marks the actor's major breakthrough into international cinema. Inowaki's other talents include basketball, swimming, baseball and dance. Inowaki recently entered middle school, and plans to continue acting in films and TV in the future.

HARUKA IGAWA (KANEKO)

Born in June 29, 1976 in Tokyo, Japan, Haruka Igawa began her acting career in 1999. Her popular appearances in commercials and gravure magazines helped create the "therapeutic" actresses boom in Japan, a social craze for entertainers known for their soft, delicate features and soothing presence. In 2001 she won the Graph Prize at the Golden Arrow Awards sponsored by the Japan Magazine Publishers Association. Igawa made her screen debut in 2001's FILAMENT by Jinsei Tsuji, and her temperate and characteristically fresh onscreen presence garnered wide acclaim. Igawa's performance in her stage debut, HAKANA, brought the actress another Golden Arrow award, this time for Best Newcomer. Since then Igawa has appeared in popular films such as DOG STAR by Takahisa Zeze, TOKYO.SORA by Hiroshi Ishikawa, 69 by Lee Sang-il, DEATH WATER by

Kiyoshi Yamamoto, and many others. In 2006 Igawa further established herself as a rising talent when she won the Best Supporting Actress Award at the 20th Takasaki Film Festival and Japan Movie Critics Award for her role in JYUKAI: THE SEA OF TREES BEHIND MT. FUJI directed by Tomoyuki Takimoto.

KANJI TSUDA (KUROSU)

One of the most recognizable and hardworking talents in the Japanese film industry, Kanji Tsuda has appeared in various roles in films, TV, and on stage. Born on August 27, 1965 in Fukui prefecture, Japan, Tsuda began his distinguished film career in Takeshi Kitano's SONATINE (1993). Over the years Tsuda continued to work frequently with Director Kitano, appearing in the internationally acclaimed HANA-BI (1998), DOLLS (2002) and ZATÔICHI (2003). Tsuda has also been involved in many films by renowned Japanese directors such as Katsuhito Ishii and Naoto Takenaka. His eclectic filmography includes both indie fares such as Kiyoshi Sasabe's CURTAIN CALL (2005) as well as blockbusters including Takashi Shimizu's JU-ON (2003) and THE SINKING OF JAPAN (2006). In 2002 Tsuda won the Best Supporting Actor award at the 45th Blue Ribbon Awards for his performance in Yoshimitsu Morita's COPYCAT KILLER. The veteran actor also won the Special Award at the 2004 Tokyo International Film Festival for his performance in Tomoyuki Takimoto's JYUKAI: THE SEA OF TREES BEHIND MT. FUJI.

KOJI YAKUSHO (THIEF)

Born on January 1, 1956 in Isahaya, Nagasaki prefecture, Japan, Koji Yakusho gained recognition for his many award-winning performances in both domestic and international motion pictures, and is now recognized as one of the most gifted and established Japanese actors of his time.

In 1983 Yakusho played the role of the feudal warlord, Nobunaga Oda, in NHK's weekly prime-time period drama TOKUGAWA IEYASU. His strong presence captivated audiences and propelled him into the national spotlight. In 1988, he landed his first leading role in the movie, ANOTHER WAY, and in 1989 he won his first Japan Academy Award for his role in UNDER AURORA. He starred in three films in 1996: SHALL WE DANCE?, SLEEPING MAN and SHABU GOKUDO. He won a total of fourteen prominent movie awards for best actor. Subsequent to its domestic box-office success, Masayuki Suo's SHALL WE DANCE? was released in theaters in the US in 1997. His performance won the attention of American audiences and the movie soon became the highest-grossing Japanese movie in US history. In the same year, Yakusho received many prestigious awards for his performances in PARADISE LOST, CURE and Shohei Imamura's THE EEL, with the latter awarded the 1997 Palme D'or at the

Cannes Film Festival. In 1998, in recognition of his talent and achievement, he was commended by the Minister of Education in Japan.

CHARISMA, directed by Kiyoshi Kurosawa, was selected for Director's Fortnight at the 1999 Cannes Film Festival. In the following years, EUREKA and WARM WATER UNDER A RED BRIDGE also competed at the Cannes Film Festival. Yakusho won the award for best leading actor for his performance in WARM WATER UNDER A RED BRIDGE at the Chicago International Film Festival. In 2000, Kon Ichikawa's DORA-HEITA was invited to be presented at the Berlin International Film Festival. Yakusho's performances in these critically acclaimed films continue to win him international attention.

In 2005, Yakusho appeared in the Academy Award-nominated Hollywood production MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA (directed by Rob Marshall). He also appeared in Alejandro González Iñárritu's BABEL, which won the Ecumenical Jury Award and the Best Director Award at the 59th Cannes Film Festival, and the Best Motion Picture Award at the 64th Golden Globe Awards.

Since then, he has gone on to star in domestic box office hits LORELEI: THE WITCH OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN (2005) and THE UCHOTEN HOTEL (2006) as well as the Japan/Canada/Italy co-production film SILK (2008), directed by Francois Girard, and the critically acclaimed drama I JUST DIDN'T DO IT by Masayuki Sudo.

CREW BIOGRAPHIES

KIYOSHI KUROSAWA (DIRECTOR/WRITER)

Born on July 19, 1955 in Kobe, Hyogo Prefecture, Japan, Kurosawa started directing 8mm independent films while studying Sociology at Rikkyo University. In 1980, his first work SHIGARAMI GAKUEN screened at PIA Film Festival. Kurosawa then spent the next few years studying with directors Kazuhiko Hasegawa and Shinji Somai. In 1983, he made his commercial debut with the feature film, KANDAGAWA WARS.

In the next couple of years, THE EXCITEMENT OF THE DO-RE-MI-FA GIRL and GUARD FROM UNDERGROUND were released and Kurosawa attracted enthusiastic fans. In 1992 Kurosawa won a coveted spot in the Sundance Institute Screenwriter's Lab with his original screenplay CHARISMA.

His SUIT YOURSELF OR SHOOT YOURSELF! series (1995-1996) and THE REVENGE series (1997) created more avid Kurosawa fans. Following the debut of CURE at the 1997 Tokyo International Film Festival, the film achieved international recognition and was theatrically released in many parts of the world. Kurosawa went on to win the Best Director prize for CURE at the Yokohama Film Festival.

In 1999, LICENSE TO LIVE screened in the Berlin Film Festival Forum, and CHARISMA was highly acclaimed at the Cannes Film Festival Directors' Fortnight. Later that same year BARREN ILLUSION was screened at the Venice International Film Festival. In 2001 PULSE screened at the Cannes Film Festival in Un Certain Regard, where it won the Critics' Prize. Later that year, the film also garnered the Critics' Prize at the Sitges Film Festival.

Two years later, Kurosawa returned with BRIGHT FUTURE, screening In Competition at the 2003 Cannes International Film Festival. That same year DOPPELGANGER, about a man who faces his alter-ego, was selected as the opening film for the Pusan International Film Festival. RETRIBUTION, finished in 2006, was officially selected for the Venice Film Festival.

FILMOGRAPHY

2008 TOKYO SONATA
2006 RETRIBUTION
2005 LOFT
HOUSE OF BUGS (short)
2002 BRIGHT FUTURE
DOPPELGANGER

2000 PULSE
1999 CHARISMA
BARREN ILLUSION
SÉANCE
1998 LICENSE TO LIVE
1997 CURE
SERPENT'S PATH
EYES OF THE SPIDER
1996 DOOR III
SUIT YOURSELF OR SHOOT YOURSELF 5 – THE NOUVEAU RICHE
SUIT YOURSELF OR SHOOT YOURSELF 6 – THE HERO
THE REVENGE – A VISIT FROM FATE
THE REVENGE – THE SCAR THAT NEVER FADES
1995 SUIT YOURSELF OR SHOOT YOURSELF 1 – THE HEIST
SUIT YOURSELF OR SHOOT YOURSELF 2 – THE ESCAPE
SUIT YOURSELF OR SHOOT YOURSELF 3 – THE LOOT
SUIT YOURSELF OR SHOOT YOURSELF 4 – THE GAMBLE
1991 GUARD FROM UNDERGROUND
1988 DANGEROUS STORIES
SWEET HOME
1985 THE EXCITEMENT OF THE DO-RE-MI-FA GIRL
1983 THE KANDAGAWA WARS

MAX MANNIX (WRITER)

Having spent 11 years of his life in Japan, acclaimed screenwriter Max Mannix has an Asian aesthetic in his work that is balanced with an international sensitivity. A former professional rugby player in Australia, Max recently co-wrote and co-directed DANCE OF THE DRAGON, starring Jason Scott Lee, and is presently the writer/director on the Sony Pictures Entertainment Film, RAIN FALL, starring Gary Oldman and Kippei Shiina.

SACHIKO TANAKA (WRITER)

Born in 1972 in Tokyo, Japan. A graduate of Department of Aesthetics and Art History at Tokyo University of the Arts, Sachiko Tanaka studied abroad in Nebraska, USA before experiencing a myriad of different professions. She continued her studies at Tokyo University of the Arts' Graduate School of Film and New Media program, where she studied under the screenwriter Yozo Tanaka and the film director Kiyoshi Kurosawa. In 2007 she won the prestigious 33th Kido Award for her screenplay NATSU NO TABI. TOKYO SONATA marks her first participation in a feature-length motion film.

AKIKO ASHIZAWA (CINEMATOGRAPHER)

Born in Tokyo, Akiko Ashizawa led a unique career as one of the very few female cinematographers in Japan. Since becoming an independent Director of Photography in 1982, Ashizawa has worked in several TV commercial films. She worked as a cinematographer for UNLOVED (2001), the winner of the Ecumenical Jury for Upcoming Talent. The film was the directorial debut of Kunitoshi Manda, a former screenwriter for Kiyoshi Kurosawa. Ashizawa has previously worked as a cinematographer for RETRIBUTION, Kurosawa's latest horror film in 2006. Ashizawa is also an accomplished documentarian and has shot SHANGHAI PEKING OPERA PARADISE in China and DON'T ASK FOR YOUR MOTHER'S BREAST, which chronicled the AIDS orphans and the problem of mother-to-child infection of AIDS in Thailand and India.

KAZUMASA HASHIMOTO (COMPOSER)

Kazumasa Hashimoto began playing piano at an early age. After studying music composition at a university of music in Tokyo, Hashimoto began his career as a composer and artist. He has released 4 albums so far, and has garnered international media acclaim especially from around Europe and the U.S. His composition has also been used for BBC.

Hashimoto has also been involved in the event held by Academy Award-winning musician Ryuichi Sakamoto's group "code," along with the electronica unit Sketch Show. In 2004, he took part in the German record label MORR MUSIC's Japan tour in Tokyo. In 2007, Hashimoto performed in Europe's biggest festival of progressive music and multimedia arts, SONAR Festival, held in Barcelona, Spain.

YUKIE KITO (PRODUCER)

Yukie Kito started her career at JVC Entertainment Inc in Los Angeles. In 1999 Kito joined the Tokyo-based Media Suits Inc. and was involved in distribution of MONSOON WEDDING where she developed her relationship with Mira Nair. In 2004 she joined Entertainment Farm as the Managing Director of International Division and brought in THE NAMESAKE by Mira Nair, which Entertainment Farm partnered with Fox Searchlight and India's UTV. Kito is responsible as a producer for THE HOTTEST STATE by Ethan Hawke which premiered at 2006 Venice International Film Festival and was distributed by THINKFilm in the US. She also closely worked with Wayne Wang on A THOUSAND YEARS OF GOOD PRAYERS which Entertainment Farm financed. The film won the Golden Shell at 2007 San Sebastian International Film Festival.

WOUTER BARENDRECHT (PRODUCER)

Dutch-born Wouter Barendrecht founded Fortissimo Films in 1991 after years of experience working as a programmer for the Rotterdam Film Festival and a press officer for the Berlin Film Festival's International Forum. A member of the European Film Academy, Barendrecht has, at Fortissimo Films, guided titles such as CHUNGKING EXPRESS, IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE, IRON LADIES, SUPER SIZE ME, SHORTBUS, SHINE A LIGHT and many others to international success. He has served on international juries (Berlin, Sarajevo, Edinburgh, Sydney and Jerusalem), and was the director of the inaugural Hong Kong-Asia Film Financing Forum. Together with Co-chairman Michael J. Werner, Barendrecht was awarded a Golden Kinnaree by the Bangkok Film Festival and a Silver Hugo by the Chicago Film Festival for their contribution to world cinema. He has lived in Hong Kong since 1997.

YASUSHI KOTANI (EXECUTIVE PRODUCER)

A former investment banker, Yasushi Kotani joined Japan Digital Contents in 2000 where he worked in entertainment financing. He participates extensively in working groups and research studies related to the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry in the areas of contents financing.

Kotani is CEO and President of Entertainment Farm, a Tokyo-based financing and production company which he established in 2002. In the past five years the company has been involved in six American films including THE NAMESAKE by Mira Nair which premiered at 2006 Toronto International Film Festival and A THOUSAND YEARS OF GOOD PRAYERS by Wayne Wang which won 2007 San Sebastian International Film Festival's Golden Shell. The latter also won the best actor award for Henry O in the starring role. The Company has also financed

twelve Japanese films including J-Horror Theater franchise films which are distributed worldwide by Lionsgate. One of the J-Horror franchise, RETRIBUTION, was directed by Kiyoshi Kurosawa and screened at 2006 Venice International Film Festival.

MICHAEL J. WERNER (EXECUTIVE PRODUCER)

Michael J. Werner, from the USA, is a long-time veteran of the movie sales business, with more than 25 years experience in international sales and consulting, specialising in the Asia-Pacific region. With a previous focus on big commercial films, he handled international sales on such titles as DIE HARD 3, TALK RADIO and EVITA. Prior to joining Fortissimo, Werner's consulting clients have included 20th Century Fox International, IBM, PolyGram Films and The Sunshine Group among other international producer/distributors. With Co-chairman Wouter Barendrecht, Werner was awarded a Silver Hugo by the Chicago Film Festival and the Golden Kinnaree by the Bangkok Film Festival for his contribution to world cinema. In 2006 he became an Executive member of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (the Oscars). He has lived in Hong Kong since 1995.

PRODUCTION COMPANIES

Entertainment Farm is a Tokyo-based finance and production company founded in 2002. It aims to cultivate film entertainment in the manner of farm work through collaboration with filmmakers of substance. Headed by Kotani Yasushi, in the past five years the company has been involved with the financing and production of twelve Japanese and six American films. The twelve Japanese films include four J-Horror franchise films from the prominent Japanese producer Taka Ichise. Included in the franchise is Kiyoshi Kurosawa's *Retribution* (2006). For more information please visit www.entertainmentfarm.biz.

Fortissimo Films is one of the world's leading international film, television and video sales organizations, specialising in the production, presentation, promotion and distribution of award-winning and innovative feature films. With offices in Amsterdam, London, Sydney, New York, Paris and Hong Kong and agents in Tokyo, Beijing and the Middle East, the company has a truly global presence and worldwide reach. For more information please visit www.fortissimofilms.com.